

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CA-01
AID-05 VO-05 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00 NSAE-00 L-03
DODE-00 INR-10 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/092 W

-----012961 290359Z /15

P 290259Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8488

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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EO 11651: NA

TAGS: REF

SUBJ: US-ASEAN DIALOGUE: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

REF A, KUALA LUMPUR 7526, B. BANGKOK 21318

1. WHILE THE FLOW OF BOAT REFUGEES IN THAILAND IN
RECENT WEEKS HAS BEEN LOW, LAND REFUGEES ARE ARRIVING
AT A VERY HIGH RATE. BY THE END OF THE MONTH, ABOUT
2500 LAND REFUGEES WILL HAVE ARRIVED IN THAILAND
DURING JULY, ALL BUT ABOUT 100 FROM LAOS.

2. WE FULLY SUPPORT EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR (REFTEL A)

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ON THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSCORING TO ASEAN DELEGATES
THE CONTINUING COMMITMENT BY THE US TO ACCEPT INDO-
CHINA REFUGEES OVER THE LONGER TERM AND WE
COMPLETELY AGREE THAT WE SHOULD PROVIDE THE ASEAN
REPRESENTATIVES WITH THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE ASSURANCE
POSSIBLE WITH REGARD TO A LONG-TERM US REFUGEE
ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM. SUCH ASSURANCE WILL HELP TO

DEFUSE ANY TENDENCY WHEREBY THE MALAYSIANS AND THE THAI MIGHT, SINGLY OR JOINTLY, MOVE TOWARD MEASURES TO DISCOURAGE REFUGEE ARRIVALS.

3. WHILE RTG REMAINS FOR THE PRESENT RELATIVELY CALM ON REFUGEE ADMISSIONS, THERE IS INCREASING CONCERN OVER THE GROWTH OF THE LAND REFUGEE POPULATION AND THE SEEMINGLY UNENDING FLOW OF REFUGEES FROM ACROSS THE MEKONG RIVER. THE RTG REMAINS APPREHENSIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE REFUGEE SITUATION. GENERAL KRIANGSAK STRESSED TO AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION MINISTER MACKELLAR THE FACT THAT THAILAND MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO ACCEPT REFUGEES ON AN OPEN-ENDED BASIS (REFTEL B). GENERAL SRISAK, DEPUTY UNDER-SECRETARY, MOI, ON JULY 28 TOLD EMBOFFS THAT WHILE THERE CONTINUES TO BE SERIOUS DELIBERATION ABOUT MOVING ON A PILOT PROJECT BASIS TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR SMALL NUMBERS OF LAND REFUGEES, THERE IS, AT THE SAME TIME, CONTINUING RTG CONCERN IN THAILAND OVER THE FLOW OF REFUGEES.

4. GENERAL SRISAK ALSO NOTED THAT IN THE WAKE OF AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION MINISTER MACKELLAR'S VISIT TO THAILAND, THE RTG IS CONSIDERING THE PROS AND CONS OF HIS PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON INDO-CHINESE REFUGEES. SRISAK NOTED THAT SUCH A MEETING SHOULD FOCUS ON THE LAND REFUGEE PROBLEM AS WELL AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE BOAT REFUGEE SITUATION. SRISAK SAID THE RTG CONTINUES TO HOPE THAT LAND REFUGEES CAN BE RESETTLED IN AGRARIAN SETTINGS IN LATIN AMERICA. PRESUMABLY, THE RTG WOULD BROACH THIS AT AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING. SRISAK SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED BRAZIL, PARAGUAY, AND FRENCH GUIANA AS POSSIBLE RESETTLEMENT COUNTRIES AND NOTED THAT IN BOLIVIA THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION MAY SLOW THE LONG-PLANNED FOOD-FOR-THE-HUNGRY RESETTLEMENT SCHEME THERE. O'DONOHUE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BANGKO21516
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780311-0364
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978075/aaaaaeec.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5fe0f071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 KUALA LUMPUR 7526, 78 BANGKOK 21318
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1978039
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-ASEAN DIALOGUE: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES
TAGS: SREF, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5fe0f071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014